

**Little Traverse Township Zoning Board of Appeals**  
**October 22, 2020 5:30 PM**  
**Township Hall**  
**Minutes**

**FILE COPY**

Chairman Duran called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

**Roll Call:** Present: Matt Duran, Joe Leach & Joe Chattaway  
Absent: None

Staff present: Bill Dohm, & Ruben Shell

Also present: Buddy Stoddard, Carolyn Dettmer, Architect & Steve Bush,  
(attachment page 4).

**Agenda:** A **motion** was made by Mr. Chattaway and seconded by Mr. Duran. The agenda as presented was approved by unanimous voice vote, (attachment page 5)..

**Minutes:** Following review of the minutes of August 27, 2020 a **motion** to approve the minutes as presented was offered by Mr. Chattaway and supported by Mr. Leach. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**Case #A-9-2020** It was announced that the Case has been withdrawn by the applicant.

**Case #A-10-2020**

Conduct a **Public Hearing** on an application by Stanford Stoddard for a front yard set-back variance to construct a detached garage at 1287 Fern Ave in the plat of Ramona Park. The property is zoned RR, is a non-conforming zoning lot, and is more particularly described in tax parcel #24-08-16-17-401-030.

Mr. Dohm advised that the public hearing notice had been published, posted, and sent to all surrounding property owners within 300' of the subject property.

**5:05 PM.** - Chairman Duran opened the meeting to a Public Hearing.

Mr. Shell presented his Memorandum dated September 9, 2020, explaining the request, outlining the Findings of Fact, and listing of possible considerations for the Board.  
(attachment pages (6 - 8).

Chairman Duran asked for public comment.

Mr. Buddy Stoddard advised he was representing the applicant. He gave a brief statement regarding his family's presence in the area. He stated that one reason they

removed one driveway exit was because that exit had poor road traffic visibility. Other reasons given for alterations in the driveway were associated with general aesthetics.

Ms. Dettmer, Architect for the project stated that the need for car storage on site became more evident with the outbreak of the new Corona Virus pandemic in 2019.

Mr. Bush explained the community, hazards on Fern Ave. and traffic concerns. He expressed concern that on Fern Avenue there were no sidewalks causing a worrisome mix of pedestrian traffic, bicycles, and inappropriate motor vehicle speeds.

Mr. Leach thought there was plenty of area that the garage could be built without a variance, and questioned why it could not be placed within the required setback areas. He indicated that better planning before the house was sited could have provided such a location. Now, it appeared to be a self-imposed hardship to site a garage outside the standard building envelope.

Mr. Leach questioned if there wasn't a better place for the garage to allow for better snow removal. Mr. Stoddard responded that the location of the wellhead limited the areas for snow storage. Concerns about possible lawn and shrub damage from snow plowing were cited.

Chairman Duran asked if there were any more public comments. There were none.

**6:30pm** Chairman Duran closed the public hearing.

Mr. Dohm explained that each criteria to approve a variance had to be met, and that since Mr. Shell's memorandum sited 3 criteria as not being met, it was up to ZBA members to consolidate both memorandum facts with input from the public hearing to decide if they were satisfied that each item had been satisfactorily met.

Mr. Duran expressed his view that each case needed to be weighed on its' own merits, and he was satisfied that this variance met the criteria for approval.

Mr. Chattaway expressed his view that the non-conformity of all lots in the surrounding area caused extra consideration, and he was satisfied that all criteria for approval had been met.

Mr. Leach expressed his view that the garage could very well be placed within the standard setback area if properly thought out, and that the hardship element was self-imposed.

Following Board discussion, Mr. Chattaway motioned that: Due to the findings of fact as stated above, (*in the final decision attached, page 10 - 12*), I move to approve, Case A-10-2020, Stoddard ZBA variance application dated September 15, 2020 for a front setback

variance of 33 feet in order to add a new accessory structure in the form of a detached garage at 1287 Fern Avenue, plat of Ramona Park (ID 08-16-17-401-030).

Upon a second by Mr. Duran the motion carried by the following roll call vote:

Joe Chattaway Yea

Matt Duran Yea

Joe Leach Nay

**6:40 PM.** - Chairman Duran called a recess to have the Final Decision for Case #A-10-2020 typed up for review and signature.

**6:55 PM.** -Chairman Duran called the meeting back to order.

Case #A-10-2020 Final Decision was read and approved by the affixed signatures, (attached pages 10 - 12).

**Open Discussion for items not on the agenda:**

Public Comment or Correspondence received. There was none.

**Report by Planning Commission Representative:** There was none.

**Report by Twp. Board Members:** Mr. Dohm advised that Case #A-9-2020 may be back for consideration in November.

**Adjourn:** There being no further business to be brought before the Board, Chairman Duran adjourned the meeting at 7:05 P.M.

Secretary Joe Chattaway  
Joe Chattaway, Secretary

Respectfully Submitted,

William P. Dohm

William P. Dohm

Recording

1-28-2021

Date Approved